Research Proposal on

A Critical Analysis of Karma, Re-Birth & Moksha with special reference to Bhagawad Gita

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A Critical Analysis of Karma, Re-birth & Moksha with special reference to Bhagawad Gita.

Across all Indian philosophical system (except Carvaka) whether it is theistic like; Nyaya-Vaishesika, Sankhya –Yoga, Purva and Uttara Mimansa or Atheistic like; Jainism or Buddhism. it is noticed that the life of an individual is governed by the law of Karma. Unless the karmic cycle stops the individual soul has to take birth-death-rebirth in Samsara. Since the life is full of suffering so it is the innate desire of an individual soul to get rid of it as early as possible. As per the Indian scriptures there are four goals of Human life called Purushartha like 1. Dharma, 2. Artha, 3. Kama and 4. Moksha.

Lets see moksha in detail.

Moksha is unique to Indian philosophic tradition and it is rooted in the understanding that human being have the inherent capability to transcend the limitations imposed by the nature and attain freedom in an absolute sense. Moksha is about getting off the wheel of samsara or the cycle of suffering caused by birth, death and re-birth.

Although the reason for poverty and low standard of living in India are very complicated and various factors like social customs, lack of education, state of politics, plurality of religion affects them but being a student of philosophy we would like to study about the concept of Moksha and its

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impact on re-birth.

Objectives:

1. *To study the law of Karma*
2. *To Know the concept of Moksha in comprehensive manner*
3. *To measure the impact of Karma on Moksha in India*
4. *To find out the important factors affecting Moksha and causing re-birth.*

Literature Review

Moksha is the union of the atma (individual soul) with the Brahman (world soul). This union however is not easy as the individual soul, filled with desire (Love, hate, Anger, fear & greed) incessantly reincarnates itself through rebirth. Even if residual desire remains moksha is difficult to attain. As the soul finds unity with the supreme being and the person exists the cycle of birth , death and rebirth, self realization occurs. In the process of achieving moksha, one loses the focus on the ego and the body and is able to focus on his / her divine self.

This research paper tries to examine the relevance of the concept of Moksha as the ultimate goal of human life.

Concept of Moksha in Indian Philosophy:

Across the Indian philosophy whether it is Theistic or Athiestic, Moksha is present as the ultimate goal of an individual life. Liberation, Apavarga, Kaivalya, freedom, Mukti, etc are

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used almost synonymously.

The present life is considered to be the result of many lifetimes of past desires, karmas and the result of those previous karmas. The result of these previous karmas are unfolding at every moment. Some karma is mature and bearing fruit at the present moment, other karmas are lying as seed waiting to mature at future time. All that we have done in the past creates who we are in the present and all that we do in the present is creating who we will be in the future. In this way there is a great cycle of desire, action (karma) and reaction that drives the wheel of life. As a result, all beings are forced to remain with in this world in order to experience the fruit of their desires and actions (karmas).

Bhradaranyaka Upanisad says that by performing good actions one becomes good and by performing bad actions one is branded as bad. As a principle of moral determinism karma makes us realize that "what you sow, that you reap". But karma can't be reduced to fatalism. It is a principle of freedom, although it is conditioned by previous actions. Every human individual is free to act at present as to determine his or her future life.

Except Carvaka all Indian philosophical systems agree that every moral agent has freedom to act by deliberate choice of actions and thoughts (knowledge) to influence one's own course of life.

Of course one may find a paradox here. The paradox is that the law of karma vacillates between freedom and determinism. Freedom has no meaning unless the free actions performed by the individual have power to determine future events. If my regular exercise and diet intake do not have any determinate state of my health then there is no point talking about the freedom of one's action. In Indian ethics there is no dispute in accepting the conditional existence of individuals in terms of circumstances, situations, and past actions. However this condition is not complete in itself. The freedom of individuals in the form of choices may bring in new determining factors or

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conditions into situation. This clearly shows that there is an element of *freedom of will* to control over the conditions of existence.

Although we admit that our birth was conditioned by the law of karma there is every possibility for individuals to affect the course of action of the present life through freedom of will to transform the conditions of future birth in the next life. Except Carvaka, all others accept that good conduct and right knowledge would be effective in transforming ones's condition from bondage to liberated state.

Kinds of Karma:

There are three kinds of karmas according to Indian Philosophy. It is

A. Sanchita Karma B. Prarabdha Karma C. Agami Karma

The Karmas which got accumulated in the past lives and could not get exhausted accrue in the account of the moral agent who is responsible for those karmas. The accumulation of such Karmas of the past are technically called sanchita karma.

The karmas that are in operation in the present life are called Prarabdha karmas.

The karmas that are going to be accumulated are called agami-Karmas or karmas in store. An individual has to exhaust all these three forms of Karmas leading to Moksha is something very precious and ultimate goal of human life.

Desires and actions (karmas) are said be the sources of reincarnation. Beings continue to "rotate" through endless lifetimes in this physical world. Sometimes in heaven (nice places) sometimes in the middle regions (medium places) and sometimes in the hellish realms. This rotation through endless life times is the process of reincarnation called samsara in Sanskrit. The ultimate goal of life mentioned in all philosophical system is to break this cycle of re-incarnation,

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to escape samsara. Breaking this cycle is done through the process prescribed by different systems differently, called as Moksha, liberation or freedom, or Mukti.

From Spiritual point of view, real achievement of life is not money, power, luxury neither it is sexual nor eating pleasure. It is neither business nor political power nor any type of instinctive nor intellectual needs. These are natural pursuits in human life to be sure, but our divine aim on this earth must be to personally realize our identity in and with God. Identifying ourselves with God is called enlightenment, self realization, God realization and Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

The liberated soul or atma finally enters the abode of God, the kingdom of God. The ultimate goal of every life for all human beings, is to reach the stage of moksha or salvation.

According to the scriptures, the discipline of unattached action (Nishkama Karma) can lead to salvation of the soul. So they recommend that one should remain detached while carrying out his duties in life. As lord Krishna said in the Bhagwad-Gita " To the man thinking about the objects (of the senses) arises attachements towards them; from attachment arises longing; and from longing arises anger; from anger comes delusion; and from delusion loss of memory; from loss of memory, the ruin of discrimination and on the ruin of discrimination, he perishes.

People believe that the soul passes through a cycle of successive lives (Samsara) and its next incarnation is always dependent on how the previous life was lived (karma). In a life time people build up karma both good and bad , based on their actions within that life time. This karma affects their future lives and existences.

Moksha is the end of the birth-death and rebirth cycle. It is classed as the fourth and ultimate

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goal of Humen life. It is the transcendence of all arthas. It is achieved by overcoming ignorance and desires. It is a paradox in the sense that overcoming desires also includes overcoming the desire for moksha itself. It can be achieved both in this life and after death.

Bhagavad Gita literally means "The Lord's Song" i.e the philosophical discourse of Lord Krishna to persuade the reluctant Arjuna to fight. It is the most popular and sacred book and is contained in the Bhishma –Parva of the Mahabharata, the greatest Sanskrit epic.

The concept of liberation (Moksha) is a very significant concept in Indian philosophy. As a necessary concept in Indian philosophy, the concept of liberation has occupied a significant place in the Bhagwadgita also.

Bhagavad Gita recognizes liberation (Moksha) as the supreme goal of an individual. The Bhagawad Gita describes liberation or Moksha as the attainment of individual's nature state by relinquishing its imposed state. Liberation is the supreme and highest status beyond good and evil.

The Gita conceived liberation or Moksha as the eternal and indestructible status and as the seat free from all troubles along with the freedom from birth and death. Liberation is the state where there is no pain. It is the state of supreme perfection.

The state of liberation is explained as the transcendental perfection of the individual self, the attainment of God and inseparable union with him. The Gita maintains that the liberation is supreme and highest bliss, which springs from union with god. Liberation or Moksha in the Gita is delight in the self, contentment with the self, self realization, self fulfillment. It is free from moral obligations.

As stated in Gita liberated person neither acts nor causes others to act.

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Many Scriptures discuss various states and types of Moksha attained by various means like, knowledge, bhakti, yoga etc. Especially eight stages or types of moksha are defined in various texts.

1. Salokya Mukti
2. Samipya or Sannidhya Mukti
3. Sarupya Mukti
4. Sayujya Mukti
5. Karama Mukti or Avantara Mukti
6. Vishishtadvaita Moksha
7. Purva –Mimamsa Mukti
8. Apavarga Mukti
9. Kaivalya

Methodology of Research Study:

To carry out detailed study in research procedure and to make findings of research report practical and purposeful both primary and secondary method of the collection of data will be applied to :

Primary Data Collection:

Primary data will be collected through surveys, the questionnaires and also with the application of face to face interview methods. Structured questionnaires will be prepared and distributed between the target groups. The replies to the questions will be taken as the tool to be processed for exhaustive findings.

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Secondary Data Collection:

The collection of secondary data comprises the consultation and guidance with the various research papers, documents and reports. Data so collected will be processed and analysed to get the relevant deduction for the purpose of this research study and also will be employed in the preparation of the final reports. Books written and available on this topic will be brought into review to know the opinion of different thinkers on this subject.

Sampling procedure:

Sampling procedure is the method of selecting the sample from the population. In this study a purposive sampling should be used as the sample must be educated enough to understand the concept of Moksha.(eg- Mahatma, Purohit, Scholar)

Target group to be formed:

In the preparation of target group following steps will be undertaken.

(I) The size of the sample group would be 400 – 500.

(II) The segment would be learned people of holy cities especially.

(III) The coverage of the functional area will be holy cities of India in particular and other cities in general.

Finding & Conclusion: On the basis of primary and secondary data gathered would be analysed & processed and with the help of any statistical tool such as factor analysis and regression method may be applied to get a final conclusion. In the light of various theories proposed in the respective domain, will be considered and practically analysed the hypothesis. This will lead to a logical conclusion.

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